



District Health Department No. 2

Northeast Michigan's Community Health Department

SARIN

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

What is Sarin?

Sarin is a human-made chemical warfare agent that is classified as a nerve agent. It was originally developed in 1938 in Germany as a pesticide. Sarin is a tasteless, odorless, colorless liquid that has no odor in its pure form.

Where Is Sarin Found?

Since sarin does not naturally occur in the environment, it has to be man made and released intentionally.

How Can People Be Exposed to Sarin?

Following the release of Sarin into the air, people are exposed through skin, eye contact and breathing the air. It mixes fairly easily with water so it can be used as a poison through people drinking contaminated water supplies.

What are the Symptoms of Sarin?

Some of the immediate sign and symptoms of Sarin exposure may include runny nose, watery eyes, pinpoint pupils, eye pain, blurred vision, drooling and excessive sweating, cough chest tightness, rapid breathing and diarrhea. Also, increased urination, confusion, drowsiness, weakness, headache, abdominal pain, slow/fast heart rate, and low or high blood pressure are signs of sarin exposure. Exposure to large doses of Sarin can cause loss of consciousness, convulsions, paralysis, and respiratory failure possibly leading to death.

Can Sarin Be Treated?

It is possible to recover from Sarin exposure with treatment. There are antidotes available but they must be used quickly to be effective. Therefore, the best thing to do it to avoid exposure if possible.

What Should I Do If I Am Exposed To Sarin?

If exposed to Sarin, leave the area and get to fresh air, remove any clothing that may be contaminated and wash your entire body with soap and water. If sarin has been swallowed, seek immediate medical attention. Do not induce vomiting.

For more information on Sarin, please visit the Center's for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov or call District Health Department #2 at 1-800-504-2650.

Information taken from the Center's for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov.